Increase in Import Duty on Coal

1093. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 64 mines in the Eastern Coalfields are proposed to be closed;

(b) whether the Eastern Coalfields and some other companies are not able to compete with the imported Indonesian coal;

(c) whether the Indonesian coal has the advantage of very low wages in Indonesia itself; and

(d) if so, whether Government will enhance the import tariff on imported coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) The Board of Directors of Eastern Coalfieds Limited (ECL) recommended closure of 64 mines in six areas of the company.

(b) Coal imported from Indonesia, Australia, South Africa and China are more competitively priced than Indian coal at certain locations in this country.

(c) No information about the wages of coal labour in Indonesia is available with the Ministry of Coal.

(d) No, Sir.

Supply of military equipment by Isreal Government

1094. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the U.S. Government is putting pressure on Israel Government not to sell or supply military equipment to India;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) whether Government have taken up this issue with the U.S. Government during Indo-U.S. talks; if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Government is not aware of the US Government putting pressure on Israel not to sell or supply military equipment to India.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Proposals with regard to controlling of nuclear weapons

1095. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the three services Army, Navy and Air Force have made certain proposals with regard to the controlling of the nuclear weapons;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) India's nuclear deterrent is predicated on the basic principle of strict political/ civilian control. Such control would be exercised through appropriate scientific, technological and military management of the nuclear assets of the country to prevent unauthorised or accidental use. The Government of India is involved in the process of refining the command and control structure that will enable strict political control over a credible and effective deterrent against the use or the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction against India. The advice of the armed forces is one of the many inputs in this continuing exercise.

Action against guilty officials

1096. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a case of short supply in MES stores, Jabalpur in 1989-90 and 1990-91, some officials were found guilty;